





**Image 1**

Janell Cannon

*Pinduli*

acrylic & colored pencil

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers

Author: Janell Cannon, 2004

## *The Artful Thinking Program*

### **COLORS, SHAPES, LINES**

#### **What are they like? What do they do?**

*A routine for exploring the formal qualities of art.*

1. Take a minute to look at the artwork. Let your eyes wander over it freely. **What do you see?**  
Take a few observations from students and then move on to the next step.
2. Observe and describe the colors, shapes and lines in detail. Make 3 columns.

<b>COLORS</b> What colors do you see? Describe them.	<b>SHAPES</b> What kinds of shapes do you see? Describe them.	<b>LINES</b> What kinds of lines do you see? Describe them.

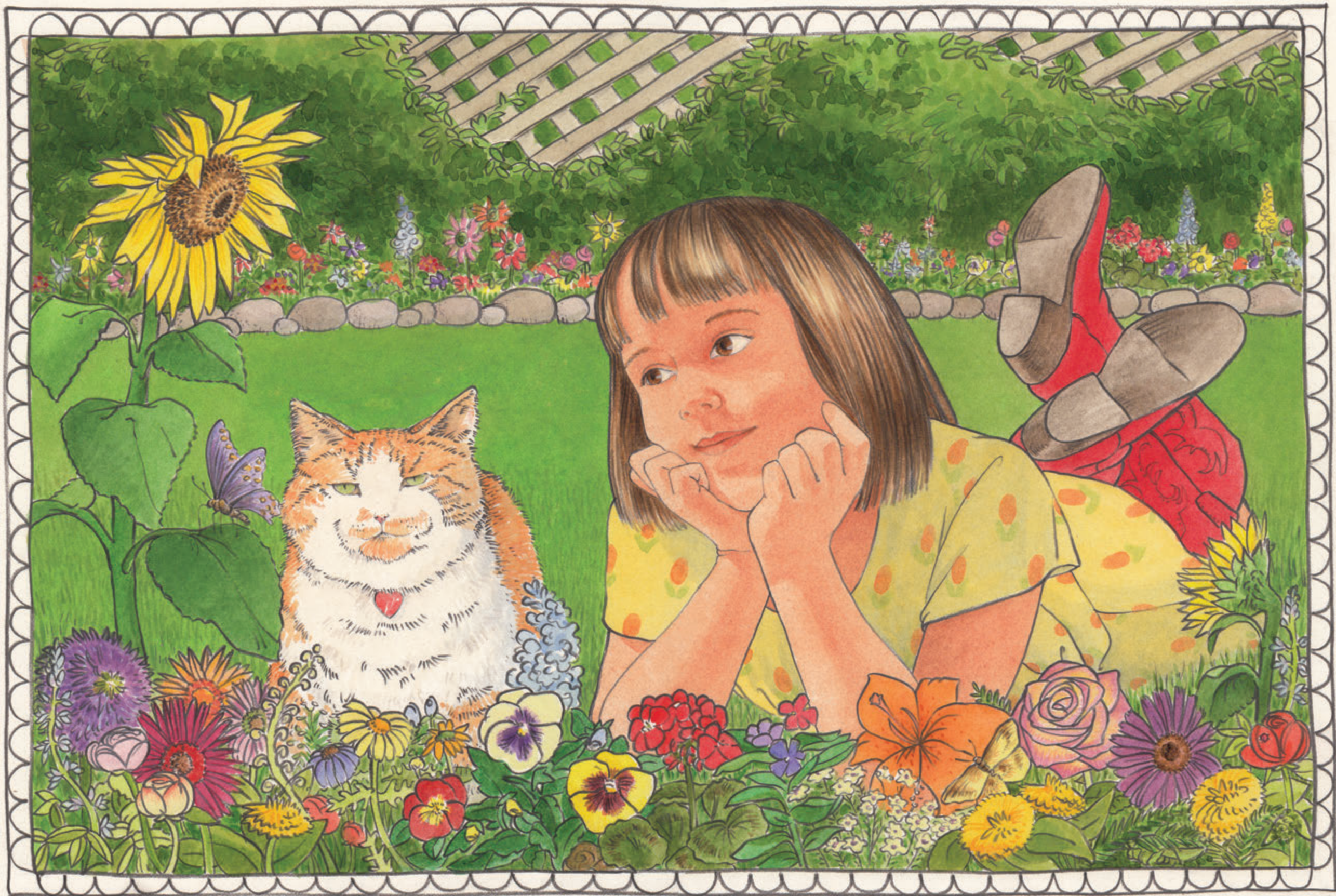
3. Choose a kind of color, shape or line that you listed.  
**How does it contribute to the artwork overall?**  
**How does it help the artwork “work?”**

Consider:

- **How does it contribute to how the artwork feels?**
  - **How does it contribute to the mood of the artwork?**
  - **How does it contribute to how the artwork looks?**
  - **How does it contribute to the story the artwork tells?**
  - **How does it contribute to the ideas in the artwork?**
- \* Do this with at least two elements. They can be chosen from any column

4. What new ideas do you have about the artwork? What do you see now that you didn’t see before?









**Image 2**

Lori Mitchell

*Different Just Like Me*

graphite pencil & acrylic wash

Publisher: Charlesbridge

Author: Lori Mitchell, 2001

## *The Artful Thinking Program*

### **PERCEIVE, KNOW, CARE ABOUT**

*A routine for getting inside viewpoints.*

- **What can the person or thing perceive?**
- **What might the person or thing know about or believe?**
- **What might the person or thing care about?**

This routine asks students to step inside the role of a character or object—from a picture they are looking at, a story they have read, an element in a work of art, an historical event being discussed, and so on—and to imagine themselves inside that point of view. Students are asked to speak or write from that chosen point of view.

In getting started with the routine the teacher might invite students to look at an image and ask them to generate a list of the various perspectives or points of view embodied in that picture. Students then choose a particular point of view to embody or talk from, saying what they perceive, know about, and care about. Sometimes students might state their perspective before talking. Other times, they may not and then the class could guess which perspective they are speaking from.

In their speaking and writing, students may well go beyond these starter questions. Encourage them to take on the character of the thing they have chosen and talk about what they are experiencing. Students can improvise a brief spoken or written monologue, taking on this point of view, or students can work in pairs with each student asking questions that help their partner stay in character and draw out his or her point of view.

Students' responses can be written down so that various perspectives can be examined and contrasted. This might take the form of a grid in which the perspectives are listed at the top and the three questions down the left-hand side. Using the grid, a teacher might ask, **whose position seems the most similar to each? Different? Most like your own?**





**Image 3**

Susie Ghahremani

*What Will Hatch?*

gouache on birch panel

Publisher: Walker Books for Young Reader

Author: Jennifer Ward, 2013

## *The Artful Thinking Program*

### **BEGINNING, MIDDLE OR END**

*A routine for observing and imagining.*

Choose one of these questions:

- **If this artwork is the beginning of a story, what might happen next?**
  - **If it this artwork is the middle of a story, what might have happened before? What might be about to happen?**
  - **If this artwork is the end of a story, what might the story be?**
- Use your imagination --

What kind of thinking does this routine encourage?

This routine is a springboard for imaginative exploration. It uses the power of narrative to help students make observations and use their imagination to elaborate on and extend their ideas. Its emphasis on storytelling also encourages students to look for connections, patterns and meanings.

When and where can I use it?

Use Beginning, Middle or End when you want students to develop their writing or storytelling skills. You can use the questions in the routine in the open-ended way they are written. Or, if you are connecting the artwork to a topic in the curriculum, you can link the questions to the topic. For example, if you are studying population density, you can ask students to keep the topic in mind when they imagine their stories.

The routine is especially useful as a writing activity. To really deepen students' writing, you can use the Ten Times Two routine with the same artwork prior to using this routine as a way of helping students generate descriptive language to use in their stories.

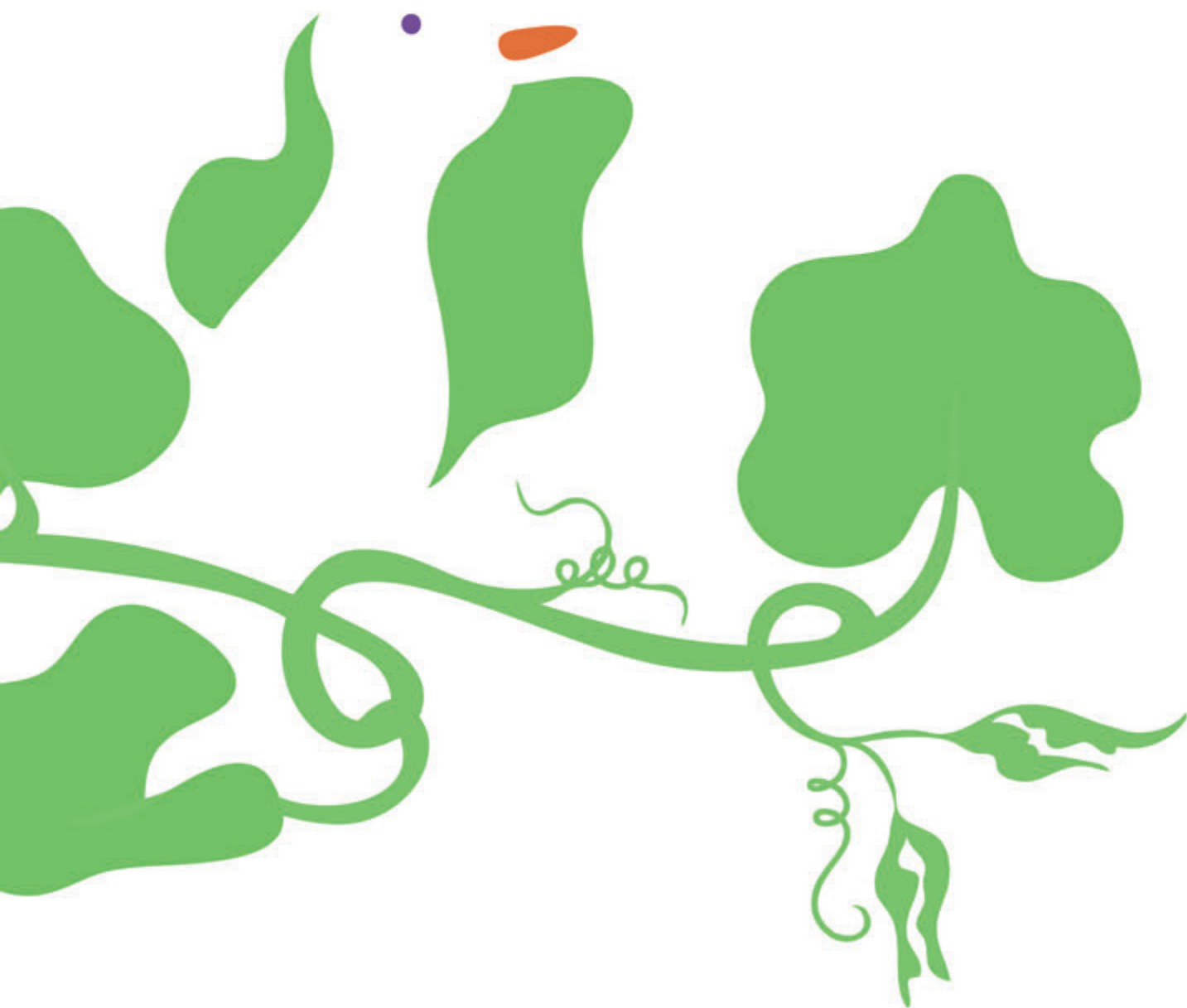
What are some tips for starting and using this routine?

Give your students quiet time to look before they begin writing or speaking.

- If you like, take a few minutes to ask the class as a whole to name several things they see in the artwork, before they begin thinking individually about a story.
- If students are writing, they can talk over their ideas with a partner before they begin to write solo. They can also write in pairs.
- If students are doing the routine verbally, they can tell stories individually, or work in pairs or small groups to imagine a story together. You can also imagine a story as a whole class by asking someone to begin a story and having others elaborate on it.

# a funny little bird

jennifer yerkes



## a funny little bird



## Image 4

Jennifer Yerkes

*A Funny Little Bird*

Digital

Publisher: Sourcebooks

Author: Jennifer Yerkes, 2013

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3. Choose a kind of color, shape or line that you listed.

**How does it contribute to the artwork overall?**

**How does it help the artwork “work?”**

Consider:

- **How does it contribute to how the artwork feels?**
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- **How does it contribute to the story the artwork tells?**
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4. What new ideas do you have about the artwork? What do you see now that you didn't see before?